

For immediate release  
February 8, 2005

## **RIO GRANDE PROJECT CENTENNIAL, RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONTROL STUDIES ON AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 16 PUBLIC MEETING**

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) announces a public meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens' Forum at 6:30 p.m. on February 16 at USIBWC Headquarters, 4171 N. Mesa Street, Building C, El Paso, Texas. The purpose of the forum is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community about the Commission's projects and related issues in the area.

The United States Bureau of Reclamation will present information about the Rio Grande Project New Mexico/Texas, a water supply project which celebrates its centennial this year. Filiberto Cortez, El Paso Field Division Manager for the Bureau, will explain why the project was initiated by the Reclamation Service, how it was developed, and its purposes. Cortez will also detail the relationship with the irrigation districts. The Rio Grande Project includes the land area along the Rio Grande from San Marcial, New Mexico at the top of Elephant Butte Reservoir to Fort Quitman, Texas. In addition to Elephant Butte, the project includes Caballo reservoir, five diversion dams on the river, and two irrigation districts. A representative of one of those districts, Angel Colon, Supervisor of Water Accounts for El Paso County Water Improvement District #1, will give an overview of district operations.

USIBWC Environmental Protection Specialist Daniel Borunda will discuss the Commission's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for its Rio Grande Flood Control Projects. In the PEIS, which is currently being developed, the USIBWC will analyze flood protection measures and alternatives to current management practices, including structural and non-structural alternatives, watershed-oriented alternatives, and collaborative measures with other agencies and landowners to determine to what extent project management can provide adequate flood protection, facilitate water

deliveries, and provide boundary stabilization. Other considerations include support for restoration of native riparian and aquatic habitats and coordination for the development of recreational opportunities.

A complete meeting agenda appears below.

The Rio Grande Citizens' Forum was established by the USIBWC in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, NM and Fort Quitman, TX. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river.

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries and settling differences that arise in their application.

For more information:

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## **RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM**

**Wednesday, February 16, 2005**

**6:30 - 8:30 P.M.**

U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC)  
4171 N. Mesa Street, The Commons, Building C  
El Paso, TX

### **Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions - Carlos Marin, Principal Engineer, USIBWC, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair
- Rio Grande Project, Authorized by Congress Feb. 25, 1905 –  
Filiberto Cortez, El Paso Field Division Manager, United States Bureau of Reclamation
- Overview of El Paso County Water Improvement District #1 - Angel Colon, Supervisor of Water Accounts, EPCWID #1
- Rio Grande Flood Control Projects Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement -  
Daniel Borunda, Environmental Protection Specialist, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion, Suggested Future Agenda Items

The next meeting will be in Las Cruces on May 4.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 915-832-4175 or e-mail [sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov](mailto:sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov).